
Government of the District of Columbia



Metropolitan Police Department

Testimony of
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***“Proposed FY2006 Budget for the
Metropolitan Police Department”***

Committee on the Judiciary
Phil Mendelson, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia

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Room 500
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
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1:45 P.M.

Chairman Mendelson, other members of the Council, staff and guests ... I appreciate the opportunity to present this brief statement outlining the Metropolitan Police Department's proposed budget for fiscal year 2006. Other members of the Department's Command Staff are with me to assist in responding to your questions. The text of my prepared testimony is posted on the Police Department's website, www.mpdc.dc.gov.

The Department's proposed operating budget for FY06 is approximately \$377 million dollars from all funding sources. The proposed budget for next year represents a modest increase of \$4.6 million dollars, or about 1.2 percent, from the Department's approved budget for FY05. Of the \$377 million dollar gross budget, approximately \$354 million dollars – or 94 percent – is locally funded. Our proposed local funds budget for FY06 represents an increase of just one-half of one percent (0.5%) over the FY05 approved local funds budget.

Just over 81 percent of the FY06 budget – almost \$306 million dollars – is for "Personal Services" to cover the salaries, fringe benefits and other costs associated with our sworn and civilian employees. The budget supports a total of 4,475 full-time equivalent employees (or FTEs), essentially the same number as the current fiscal year. The remaining 19 percent of the total budget – approximately \$71.5 million dollars – covers a variety of "Nonpersonal Services" to include specialized law enforcement purchases – such as uniforms, firearms, ammunition, and contracts for the Police and Fire Clinic, fleet, and automated traffic enforcement – as well as necessities common to most District agencies – such as utilities, telecommunications, rent, fuel, information technology support, office supplies, and janitorial contracts.

I am pleased to report that, overall, this budget supports the Department's major priorities of neighborhood patrols, crime fighting and community policing. I believe that the FY06 budget, while fiscally prudent and responsible, will enable the MPD to continue the strong record of crime reduction that we have achieved over the past few years. Crime in the District of Columbia declined by 18 percent last year, and that trend has continued into the first four months of 2005. I am confident that we will be able to maintain, and build upon, these successes into 2006 with the budget that has been proposed.

Probably the most significant features of the proposed FY06 budget are that it maintains the MPD's authorized sworn strength at 3,800 members, and it supports our continuing efforts to put even more of those officers on the streets, in operational assignments in our neighborhoods. With the support of the Mayor and the Council, the MPD reached our goal of 3,800 sworn members in September 2004, and we have stayed at, or very close to, 3,800 ever since. Having the full complement of sworn members has made a tremendous difference in our ability to staff our Police Service Areas and carry out specialized enforcement, intervention and prevention strategies.

In addition to maintaining 3,800 sworn members, the proposed FY06 budget supports more officers on the streets by fully funding the civilianization program that began this fiscal year. The Department has identified 83 administrative and support positions currently held by sworn police officers that are in the process of being transitioned to civilian employees. These positions include cellblock technicians, front-desk customer service personnel in our district stations, crime analysts,

firearms instructors and others. The Mayor's budget for FY06 would fund these civilian positions for the full year. Importantly, the budget also includes close to half a million dollars to cover the Nonpersonal Services expenses associated with the civilianization initiative. Our ongoing civilianization efforts, coupled with internal management reforms and the new legislation restricting the amount of time that members can be in a less than full-duty status, are really making a difference in terms of having more officers available for full-duty, crime-fighting assignments in our neighborhoods.

One thing the FY06 budget does not include right now are the pay raises that are part of the new collective bargaining agreement negotiated with the Fraternal Order of Police. As you know, the MPD and the union have reached a new, five-year agreement, which is now awaiting Council approval. This agreement rewards our members for their hard work and effectiveness in reducing crime, and it maintains our Department's competitive position with respect to other agencies in the region and other major cities across the country. I would strongly encourage the Council to approve the compensation portions of the collective bargaining agreement, covering both union and non-union sworn members. The Budget Office has assured us that the money to cover the pay raises in FY06 will be available through Workforce Investment funds.

The proposed budget does include funds to cover projected increases in fixed costs, such as telephone, janitorial, and security services, as well as occupancy and rental costs. It also funds projected increases in vehicle fuel costs, IT software licensing and maintenance contracts, and about \$250,000 dollars to replace body armor for our sworn personnel. The proposed budget also earmarks approximately \$140,000 dollars and one FTE to ensure the Department's continued compliance with the Language Access Act by translating and printing additional MPD documents into seven different languages. As a Phase One agency, our Department has worked hard to fulfill the requirements of the Language Access law, as part of our overall commitment to community outreach and engagement. The modest increase proposed for FY06 will allow us to continue and expand our efforts in this area. In addition, the Family Liaison Specialist Unit and our Policing for Prevention community outreach workers will continue to be funded through grants in FY06.

As Deputy Mayor Reiskin highlighted in his testimony earlier this week, FY06 will mark the transfer of three new security functions to the MPD: the school security contract, currently managed by DC Public Schools; DC Protective Services, currently under the Office of Property Management; and the DC Housing Authority Police. Our Department is in the process of putting together the transitional reports and organizational and management structures to ensure the smooth transition and effective operation of these functions within the MPD. From a public safety standpoint, I think it makes sense to bring these security functions under one roof – both to increase efficiency and coordination, and to affix responsibility and accountability. While these new functions will certainly pose challenges for the MPD, I am confident we will be able to successfully integrate them into our overall public safety strategies and programs. We will be monitoring these new functions very closely in terms of both performance and cost.

In the area of emergency preparedness, I do want to respond very briefly to some of the recent media reports about the District's spending of federal Homeland Security funds. I cannot speak for the full

range of agencies and programs that are eligible to receive and spend these grants, but I can assure the Committee that the MPD has been aggressive in seeking out and spending the Homeland Security funds that have been allocated to our Department. These funds have paid for such critical items as personal protection gear, training, specialty vehicles, communications support and the like. And, contrary to one national media report, these funds did not pay for leather jackets for MPD personnel. We look forward to receiving – and spending wisely – additional Homeland Security funds in FY06 and beyond.

Finally, I want to touch on the issue of overtime. The FY06 budget proposes a \$3 million dollar reduction in the MPD's local budget for overtime. Mr. Chairman, as you know, our Department has worked very hard – and very successfully – to reduce overtime in recent years. Between FY2000 and FY2004, total overtime hours in the MPD declined by 44 percent. Locally funded overtime hours were decreased by about two-thirds during this time period, and locally funded overtime expenditures fell by 43 percent, even as the wages of our members continued to rise. These accomplishments were largely the result of more aggressive attempts to gain reimbursement for some of our overtime expenses, better internal staffing management and court processing reforms. As the Deputy Mayor testified earlier this week, the City Administrator recently contracted for a study to look for additional savings in both court and non-court overtime. We will certainly review the study's recommendations and work with the Deputy Mayor, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and others in an attempt to reduce police overtime even further.

However, I think it is important for the Committee and the Council to understand that overtime is a necessary expense – and, quite often, a prudent expense – in the field of law enforcement. As arrests by our officers have increased – and arrests were up 15 percent during 2004 alone – the need for officers to appear in court will necessarily increase as well. Arresting criminal offenders and holding them accountable has been an important element of our crime reduction strategy, and I firmly believe it has been a major factor in the dramatic crime reductions of the past two years.

At the same time, our Department uses overtime – quite strategically and prudently, I would argue – to help us respond to emerging crime problems or geographical hot spots of crime. In these types of situations, the availability of overtime enables our Department to be proactive, to get on top of problems early on, and to help prevent some problems from spiraling out of control. Overtime allows us to be more aggressive, more nimble, more strategic and, ultimately, more successful in fighting crime than if we had to rely on hiring additional personnel or even shifting existing resources around. As you know, to reduce the hardship on our officers and their families, the union contract stipulates that the Department must give officers 14 days' notices before changing their assignments to address an emerging situation. Using overtime in these situations allows us to respond more quickly, while maintaining the integrity of our basic staffing plans.

Our Department is certainly prepared to operate within the overtime budget proposed for FY06. This will be accomplished by continuing to work with the courts, the CJCC and others in further reforming the papering process and reducing any unnecessary time that officers need to spend in court. In addition, we will continue to aggressively seek out reimbursement from the federal government, as well as private entities, for the overtime associated with their events. However, for

the reasons cited above, I would strongly urge the Committee and the Council not to cut the MPD's overtime budget even further from the reduced level proposed in the FY06 budget. For major city law enforcement agencies such as the MPD, overtime is not a luxury. It is a necessary and prudent expense in our overall public safety strategy.

In closing, let me restate that the FY06 budget, as proposed, supports the most pressing operational priorities of our Department, including 3,800 officers, continued civilianization, critical support services, officer safety and specialized needs such as language access, victim assistance and community outreach. I believe the FY06 budget will strengthen our neighborhood crime-fighting efforts and will help us build on our recent successes in making DC a significantly safer and more livable city.

I thank you again for the opportunity to read this statement into the record. My staff and I will be happy to take your questions.